

FIRE INVESTIGATOR

(Competitive Class)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

This class encompasses positions, the primary responsibility of which is the investigation of cases of suspected arson. Fire investigators respond to fire alarms when called to search for and protect any possible evidence of arson. They talk to witnesses and informants and perform any duties necessary to locate suspects and to assist in preparing arson cases for trial. Investigators must be able to operate firearms when required. Employees of this class have the authority to work independently in designated areas, receiving instruction and assistance from the Assistant Chief Fire Investigator who oversees and reviews the work of the class. This class ranks directly below that of Assistant Chief Fire Investigator.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

Examples listed below are illustrative only. They are not intended to include all duties which may be assigned, neither are they intended to exclude other duties which may be logical assignments to this class.

Examines the scene of a fire to determine the origin and cause and to determine if the fire could have been the result of arson. Restricts access to the fire scene to prevent removal, damage, or contamination of evidence. Interviews firefighters and witnesses to collect information about circumstances that may have been noted before or during the fire.

Examines the interior and exterior of the structure or vehicle and the surrounding area to gather information for use in later analysis and to corroborate or supplement the information collected in the interviews. Searches for, identifies, and collects evidence and preserves it for analysis and later use in court.

Takes photographs to provide an accurate record of the fire; takes extensive notes concerning each phase of the investigation; makes sketches and diagrams to show pertinent information. Completes a fire investigation report which includes information identifying the fire, estimating the loss or damage incurred, outlining conclusions reached by investigating personnel, and any related information required.

Collects information concerning the burned building and its contents, its owners and occupants, and possible arson suspects through interviews and search of records in order to prove whether or not a fire was the result of arson and to prepare a case for prosecution. Interrogates suspects and evaluates suspect's

responses in order to obtain facts about a crime, identify the perpetrator, and substantiate a court prosecution.

Coordinates the work of the division with related federal, state, and local agencies, releasing information and giving assistance when needed or assisting in projects of mutual concern to both the agency and the fire prevention division.

Provides on-the-job training in arson investigation for other department members, including explaining policies, procedures, and rules, and providing assistance in technical areas of work.

Performs any related duties assigned.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, all requirements listed below must be met by the filing deadline for application for admission to the examination.

Must meet all requirements of the Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Law, including being a citizen of the United States.

Before appointment, must pass a medical examination designed to demonstrate good health and physical fitness sufficient to perform any required duties of the position.

Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.

Must possess a valid driver's license.

Applicant must possess one of the following: high school diploma, high school equivalency certificate, high school transcript, affidavit from the issuing high school, associate's or bachelor's degree, or college transcript, any one of which must indicate that graduation has occurred or a degree awarded. A certification of completion shall not be sufficient to substitute for a diploma or equivalency certificate.

Must have at least one (1) year of experience in arson investigation work with a paid fire department or fire prevention agency.

OR

Must have at least three (3) years of experience in fire suppression with a paid fire department or three (3) years of

experience in some other field such as fire insurance investigations which would require applicant to attain a familiarity with fire hazards and fire cause determination.

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